

Chris Christie
Governor
Kim Guadagno
Lt. Governor



State of New Jersey
Department of Environmental Protection
STATE FORESTRY SERVICES
NEW JERSEY FOREST SERVICE

Bob Martin
Commissioner

Take notice that the NJ Department of Environmental Protection: State Forestry Services, Forest Service is proposing to conduct forest management activities on New Jersey Division of Fish & Wildlife Management Lands as identified below. The proposal is on file and available for inspection by appointment at the New Jersey Forest Resource Education Center. Interested parties may comment to the New Jersey Forest Service within 30 days of the date of this notice. Comments should be sent to: New Jersey Forest Service, Forest Resource Education Center, 370 East Veterans Highway, Jackson, NJ 08527, (732) 928-2360.

Whiting Wildlife Management Area (WMA):

Wildland – Urban Interface Mitigation (95 acres) Manchester Twp., Ocean Co.: Block 75.01 Lot 26
Block 81 Lot 1

The proposed thinning activity is a component of a larger plan for Whiting WMA and a constituent of a larger landscape scale management plan of 12,000 acres in Berkeley Township. This proposal is proposed in advance of the entire project due to public safety concerns in the area. The area to be treated consists of stands identified as PPSTOb-1 and PPSTOb-2 in the overall Whiting plan. These stands are dominated by pitch pine (*Pinus rigida*) and are in a Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) directly adjacent to residential homes. The stands comprise a hunter safety strip 450 feet wide between the homes and the rest of the WMA that is regularly treated with prescribed fire in order to also protect the homes from wildfire.

Trees presently on site cover a wide range of heights providing a fuel ladder. Thinning the forested strip to remove a volume of forest fuels to increase public safety will reduce the likelihood of fire on the ground being carried to the crowns of standing trees. This project will have no negative impacts on threatened and endangered species but will enhance the habitat for various wildlife species such as red-headed woodpecker (*Melanerpes erythrocephalis*) due to a reduction in stand density, and fuel ladder. Ladder fuels, such as woody shrubs and small trees, connect the forest floor to the canopy, increasing the risk for crown fires. Forest health will also be enhanced due to less vegetative competition for water and nutrient resources thereby facilitating increased growth and carbon sequestration.

The proposal for this activity is also available for public review in the above Office and the Division Headquarters located in Trenton, NJ. Please submit comments within 30 days of the date of this notice to: Jon Klischies, NJ Forest Service, 501 East State Street, Mail Code: 501-04, PO Box 420, Trenton, NJ 08625, (609) 984.0827.